

### Introductory notes

- These examples come from an elicitation session with Betsy Shem.
- **My overall goal** for these elicitations was to see what happens to verbs and nouns in relational constructions containing an obviative possessor: For example, 'I see their knives' vs. 'He sees **their** knives'
- I'm interested in marking for animacy, number, and obviation.
  - For this session, I focused on the verb **Waapihtim** 'S/he sees it (inanimate)', the possessor **naapaau** 'man', and the noun **muuhkumaan** 'knife'. I should try this again with another noun, like 'house', where collective ownership is more plausible.
  - **Time stamps** next to examples indicate where Betsy's pronunciation can be found in audio file REH1-020. Betsy's pronunciations are really clear. We only recorded small portions of our conversation, in accordance with Betsy's wishes.
  - **Transcriptions** are in the Northern East Cree roman orthography style found on eastcree.org
- Betsy and I worked our way through a series of pictures that I created using clip art. I showed her a picture and asked her how to say things related to that picture. The pictures are included in this file.

**Picture 1:** A picture of a hiker looking at one fisherman with one knife

Waapihtim muuhkumaaniyu

'He sees a knife' (00:13, 00:34, 01:42)

- The obviative suffix -yu is on 'knife' because 'he' is proximate

Waapihtim an muuhkumaaniyu

'He sees a knife' (00:19)

- The <an> refers to the man, kind of like 'he (that one)'

Waapihtim aniyaa muuhkumaanyiu

'He sees that knife' (00:34)

- No final /h/ on the demonstrative or noun here
- Here the demonstrative refers to 'knife' and also takes an obviative form

Waapihtim umuuhkumaan

'He sees his (own) knife' (00:46)

- The possessor is proximate, so the knife does not receive the obviative suffix -yu

Waapihtimiwaau umuuhkumaaniyu

'He (the hiker) sees his (the fisherman's) knife' (00:51)

- Clear production of relational morphology on the verb, to signal the addition of the possessor: w + aa + u

- I think the stress is not final on the noun, so there's no final /h/ there:  
<umuuhkumaanyiu>

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaauh umuuhkumaanyiu

'He sees that man's knife' (01:12)

- I hear clear /h/ on both the demonstrative and <naapaauh>

Waapihtimwaau an naapaau umuuhkumaanyiu

'That man sees his knife' (somebody else's)

Waapihtimwaau naapaauh aniyaa umuuhkumaanyiu

'He sees the man's knife' (focused on the knife) (01:29)

- I definitely heard no /h/ on <aniyya>, which is agreeing in animacy with <umuuhkumaanyiu >
- This one didn't seem as natural, where the 'knife' is being specified, but after thinking about it Betsy said it was OK.

Waapihtimwaau naapaauh umuuhkumaanyiu

'He sees the man's knife'

**Picture 2:** A picture of a hiker looking at one fisherman with three knives

Waapihtim muuhkumaanh

'He sees the knives'

Waapihtim aniyaah muuhkumaanh

'He sees those knives' (01:45)

- Here there is an /h/ on the demonstrative and the noun because they are plural. I think the final stress occurs with 'knives' too.

Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaanyih

'He (the hiker) sees his (the fisherman's) knives' (01:58)

- I think there's a clear final stress on <umuuhkumaanyih>

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaauh umuuhkumaanyih

'He sees that man's knives' (02:11)

- This one seems a bit more natural than the next version. Betsy said this version several times quite naturally.
- Again with demonstrative variation: Unprompted, Betsy also pronounces it with <aniyaayih>: <Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaauh umuuhkumaanyih> (02:33)

Waapihtimwaau naapaauh aniyaayih umuuhkumaanyih

'He sees the man's knives' (more focused on the knives) (02:44)

- Here I was asking if it's OK to modify the possessee instead of the possessor with a demonstrative.

- I'm not sure this one is 100 percent OK. Betsy repeated this one a few times, and it seemed like it's not as natural as the preceding version.

**Picture 3:** A picture of a hiker looking at two fisherman with one knife

Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniyu

'He sees their knife' (02:58)

- This was the first, immediate form that Betsy said for 'He sees their knife'
- No -waau suffix for the third-person plural possessor—just the obviative possessor suffix -yu
- I think the stress is here: <umuuhkuma**a**aniyu>

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaauh umuuhkumaanyiu

'He sees those men's knife' (03:12)

- Again the same form of <umuuhkumaaniyu> 'their knife', with penultimate stress and only the obviative possessor suffix.
- I hear /h/ on <aniyaah> and <napaauh>
- Here there is no indication of the number of the possessor in the sentence. Only context can tell you.

Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniwaayiu

'He sees their knife'

- Here I tried using the third-person possessor suffix -(i)waau. Betsy pronounced it out loud a few times and said "It's good". But it wasn't the first version she said.
- I'm not sure if she thought I said "knife" or "knives" (maybe my pronunciation wasn't clear), because of what happened next.

I asked Betsy to compare the two versions below:

1. Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniyu (03:29)
2. Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaani**wa**ayiu (03:29)

She interpreted #1 as indicating one knife, she said #2 is indicating more than one knife. I'm not quite sure what is happenin: Is it possible that the third-person possessor suffix -(i)waau can also function as a plural marker for the possessee 'knife'?

- Maybe the noun 'knife' is an issue, because it's less plausibly owned by more than one person? On the other hand, that wasn't an issue at all with <Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniyu> 'He sees their knives'. I can try another noun and check: <waaskaahiikin> 'house'

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaauh umuuhkumaaniyuh

'He sees the men's knives' (04:02)

- This one seemed natural, and again no -iwaau was with 'knives'

Waapihtimwaau naapaaauh aniyaa umuuhkumaaniyu

'He sees the men's knives' (no recording)

- Betsy said this sentence indicates more than one knife. I'm not sure what happening. Maybe it's because things seem to get less clear when I put the demonstrative next to the possessee 'knife/knives' in this construction.

**Picture 4:** A picture of a hiker looking at two fisherman with three knives

Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniyuh

'He sees their knives' (04:15)

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapaaauh umuuhkumaaniyuh

'He sees those men's knives' (no pronunciation recorded)

I asked Betsy to compare 1 and 2:

1. Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniyuh

2. Waapihtimwaau umuuhkumaaniwaauiyuh

- She said both mean the same thing. I believe #2 contains the third-person plural possessor suffix -waau (which may be getting interpreted as marking number for the possessee), and then it is followed by the plural inanimate suffix -h. It really makes me wonder if the example in #2 is double-marked for plurality of the possessee 'knives'.
- However, it is also possible that I was eliciting things in a manner that isn't the best. Could be a mistake on my part. I need to check with another noun.

Waapihtimwaau naapaaauh aniyaah umuuhkumaaniyuh

'He sees the man's knives' OR 'He sees the men's knives'

- No pronunciation recorded, unfortunately
- Betsy said this sentence in OK. It didn't seem as unusual as the examples above where I tried to add the demonstrative for the possessee instead of the possessor.
- Betsy was very clear in explaining the ambiguity of this sentence: She said the knives are plural but that the number of men is unspecified (my wording of her explanation)







